

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 184682

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP (MANSFIELD, MIKE), LA

SUBJECT: CODEL MANSFIELD

REF: A. STATE 184169

1. VIENTIANE'S 5110 REPEATED BELOW INDICATES CHARGE'S
VIEWS RE SENATOR MANSFIELD'S REQUEST TO SEE KING IN LUANG
PRABANG. PLEASE PASS TO SENATOR AND ADVISE BY RETURN CABLE
IF HE WISHES NEVERTHELESS THAT A FORMAL REQUEST FOR
AUDIENCE WITH KING BE MADE.

2. BEGIN QUOTE. COUNTRY TEAM BELIEVES THAT SENATOR'S RE-
QUEST TO SEE KING IN LUANG PRABANG, AND ONLY KING, REPRESENTS
WORST POSSIBLE SOLUTION BECAUSE:

A. IT WILL INSULT SOUVANNA PHOUMA WHO IS HIMSELF IN LUANG
PRABANG;

B. IT WILL RAISE PATHET LAO SUSPICIONS; AND
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C. EVEN IF IT IS POSSIBLE FOR SENATOR TO SEE KING, RESULT CAN ONLY BE ZERO. KING HAS NEVER TAKEN AN ACTIVE ROLE IN COUNTRY'S POLITICAL LIFE. HIS VERY PASSIVITY PROBABLY CONSTITUTES HIS GREATEST CHANCE OF STAYING ON THE THRONE.

THEREFORE, WE CANNOT CONCEIVE WHAT WORTHWHILE RESULTS WOULD BE OBTAINED BY THE SENATOR'S CALLING ON THE KING.

WE WISH TO EMPHASIZE THAT APART FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB, THE SENATOR WOULD BE THE FIRST RANKING AMERICAN TO VISIT LAOS SINCE ITS REVOLUTION. WHAT HE WOULD SAY AND WOULD DO WOULD THEREFORE BE CLOSELY OBSERVED.

WE NEED EARLIEST POSSIBLE DECISION ON THIS SUBJECT BECAUSE WE WOULD NEED TO OBTAIN KING'S ASSENT AND SEEK PGNU PERMISSION -- WHICH COULD BE SLOW IN COMING -- FOR US MILITARY AIRCRAFT TO LAND AT LUANG PRABANG. (LAST FLIGHT THERE BY ATTACHE PLANE WAS MADE SECOND WEEK IN MAY, AND WE HAVE NOT SOUGHT TO MAKE ANOTHER FLIGHT SINCE.) LUANG PRABANG AIRFIELD AT THAT TIME COULD ACCOMMODATE T-39 OR ANYTHING SMALLER, AND WE DOUBT THAT IT COULD HAVE DETERIORATED SIGNIFICANTLY IN LAST THREE MONTHS.

4. WE WAIT FOR DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE PROCEEDING FURTHER. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

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